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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE; NEA/IPA FOR
WILLIAMS/SHAMPAINE/STEINGER; NSC FOR ABRAMS/DORAN/WATERS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/22/2026
TAGS: PREL PGOV KWBG KPAL IS
SUBJECT: FORMER PA MINISTER SURVIVES ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT

CLASSIFIED BY: CONSUL GENERAL JAKE WALLES, PER REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: FORMER PA MINISTER AND CURRENT MEMBER OF THE FATAH REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL (FRC) ABD-AL-AZIZ SHAHIN (ABU ALI) WAS SHOT BY UNKNOWN GUNMEN NOVEMBER 21. SHAHIN, A CLOSE ALLY OF PLC MEMBER MOHAMAD DAHLAN, WAS MODERATELY WOUNDED IN THE ATTACK. SHAHIN IS IN GAZA'S AL-SHIFA HOSPITAL IN MODERATE CONDITION, AND PALESTINIAN PRESS REPORTS THAT PA PRESIDENT MAHMOUD ABBAS (ABU MAZIN) VISITED HIM THE MORNING OF NOVEMBER ¶22. SHAHIN IS WIDELY KNOWN TO BE CRITICAL OF HAMAS AND HAS FREQUENTLY MADE PUBLIC STATEMENTS BLAMING HAMAS FOR DETERIORATING CONDITIONS IN GAZA AND THE WEST BANK. FATAH OFFICIALS STOPPED SHORT OF PUBLICLY BLAMING HAMAS FOR THE SHOOTING, BUT HAVE PRIVATELY SAID THAT THEY HOLD HAMAS RESPONSIBLE. IN FACT, AZZAM AL-AHMAD, THE HEAD OF THE PLC FATAH BLOC, TOLD POLOFF THAT HE HAD ADVISED PALESTINIAN PRESIDENT MAHMOUD ABBAS (ABU MAZIN) TO CANCEL HIS RETURN TO GAZA FOR TALKS WITH HAMAS PM HANNIYEH IN PROTEST OF THE SHOOTING. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) FRC MEMBER AND FORMER PA MINISTER OF SUPPLIES ABU-ALI SHAHIN WAS SHOT NOVEMBER 21 IN THE THIGH BY UNKNOWN GUNMEN IN THE AL-RIMAL NEIGHBORHOOD OF GAZA CITY. ACCORDING TO LOCAL PRESS, THE SHOOTING OCCURRED AS SHAHIN EXITED SAWT AL-HURIYYAH (VOICE OF FREEDOM) RADIO STATION AFTER PARTICIPATING IN A RADIO TALK SHOW DEALING WITH A NEW GOVERNMENT. DURING THE SHOW, SHAHIN, WHO HAS BEEN PUBLICLY CRITICAL OF HAMAS, DISCUSSED HAMAS' HARD-LINE POSITIONS TOWARDS THE FORMATION OF A NEW GOVERNMENT AND SAID THE CURRENT SITUATION CAN ONLY BE RESOLVED THROUGH A NEW GOVERNMENT. (NOTE: THE GUNMEN SPRAYED ABU ALI'S CAR, SUGGESTING THAT THEY INTENDED TO KILL HIM, NOT JUST SEND A WARNING. END NOTE)

¶3. (C) FATAH OFFICIALS, INCLUDING PRESIDENTIAL SECRETARY GENERAL AL-TAYYIB ABD-AL-RAHIM, HAVE PUBLICLY CONDEMNED THE SHOOTING BUT STOPPED SHORT OF BLAMING HAMAS DIRECTLY FOR THE ATTEMPT. PLC MEMBER DAHLAN TOLD CONSUL GENERAL ON NOVEMBER 22 THAT HE DID NOT KNOW WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE, BUT HE EXPECTED TO KNOW THE IDENTITY OF THE PERPETRATORS IN A DAY OR SO. OTHER OFFICIALS FROM FATAH AND FROM ABU MAZIN'S OFFICE HAVE INSISTED PRIVATELY THAT HAMAS IS RESPONSIBLE. AZZAM AL-AHMED, HEAD OF THE FATAH BLOC OF THE PLC, HOWEVER, TOLD POLOFF NOVEMBER 22 THAT HE HAD ADVISED ABU MAZEN TO CANCEL HIS SCHEDULED TRIP TO GAZA, NOT OUT OF FEAR FOR ABU MAZIN'S SAFETY, BUT TO SEND A POLITICAL MESSAGE TO HAMAS BY PULLING BACK FROM TALKS ON A NEW GOVERNMENT.

¶4. (C) ABU MAZIN VISITED SHAHIN NOVEMBER 22 IN GAZA'S AL-SHIFA HOSPITAL, WHERE SHAHIN IS REPORTEDLY IN MODERATE CONDITION. SPEAKING TO THE PRESS, ABU MAZIN BLAMED THE SHOOTING ON PEOPLE WHO WANT TO "HARM OUR NATIONAL CAUSE."

WALLES